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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/550,592	04/17/2000	Hiroichi Inada	KPO-138	1046

23353 7590 05/22/2003
RADER FISHMAN & GRAUER PLLC
LION BUILDING
1233 20TH STREET N.W., SUITE 501
WASHINGTON, DC 20036

EXAMINER

WONG, ALLEN C

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2613

DATE MAILED: 05/22/2003

2

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/550,592

Applicant(s)

INADA ET AL.

Examiner

Allen Wong

Art Unit

2613

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 April 2000 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☒ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) ____.
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Art Unit: 2613

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

1. Acknowledgment is made of applicant's claim for foreign priority based on an application filed in 4/19/99 on 4/17/00. It is noted, however, that applicant has not filed a certified copy of the Japanese 1999-111452 application as required by 35 U.S.C. 119(b). Thus, the priority date of 4/19/99 is not given when examining the current US case. Please submit a certified copy of the Japanese 1999-111452 application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-5 and 7-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yamatsu (4,786,867).

Regarding claims 1 and 7, Yamatsu discloses a processing system, comprising:
a plurality of processing units for performing predetermined processing for a substrate (fig.1; note there are plural processing units 5, 12, 13 and 14, and that these processing units are used to perform predetermined processing to the substrate wafer 6);

Art Unit: 2613

a transfer apparatus for transferring the substrate at least between said processing units (fig.1, element 3 transfers the substrate 6 between processing units); and

first image pickup means, provided on said transfer apparatus, for picking-up an image of the inside of said processing units (fig.1, element 9 is a first image pickup means, where there are components inside the first image pickup means).

Regarding claim 2, Yamatsu discloses the processing unit provides a second image pickup means (fig.1, processing unit element 5 provides a second image pickup means 18).

Regarding claims 3-5, Yamatsu discloses the image pickup means is a CCD camera (col.3, ln.32-37; note image pickup means 9 can be configured to correspond to the positioning of the X-Y axis).

Regarding claim 8, Yamatsu discloses manual operation (col.1, ln.59-61) and automatic operation (col.2, ln.5-9).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 6 and 9-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamatsu (4,786,867) in view of Tanaka (5,815,594).

Art Unit: 2613

Regarding claim 6, Yamatsu discloses the transfer apparatus for holding the substrate wafer (fig.1, element 3). Yamatsu does not disclose a pin for holding a substrate. However, Tanaka teaches the use of a wafer chuck for holding a substrate wafer (col.6, ln.4-5). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of Yamatsu and Tanaka, as a whole, for providing a means for holding a substrate so as to securely move the substrate from one location to another location with ease.

Regarding claims 9-11 and 12-17, Yamatsu does not disclose the use of liquid system processing units for performing liquid processing to the substrate. However, Tanaka discloses the use of liquid system processing units for performing liquid processing to the substrate (fig.5, step S001-S001; Tanaka discloses the use of resist coating for liquid processing to the substrate). Tanaka also discloses the use of a spin chuck (fig.1, element 6) along with camera (fig.1, element 75) for monitoring the liquid processing. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to take the teachings of Yamatsu and Tanaka, as a whole, for applying the liquid coating so as to improve the condition of a substrate and protect the substrate from external damage.

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Allen Wong whose telephone number is (703) 306-5978. The examiner can normally be reached on Mondays to Thursdays from 8am-6pm.


Art Unit: 2613

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Christopher Kelley can be reached on (703) 305-4856. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9314 for regular communications and (703) 872-9314 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-4700.

Allen Wong
Examiner
Art Unit 2613

AW
May 15, 2003


CHRIS KELLEY
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2600